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STOCK FARMING THE BASIS OF OUR INDUSTRIES.

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REAL RURAL READING

WILL BE FOUND IN THIS DEPARTMENT.

A Farmer's Work Need Not Be Restricted to Dull Routine—Broadcasting Wheat—Handling Colts in Winter—Wide Tires for Big Loads.

Choose Your Farming.

Because a man is a farmer it need not follow that his work must be restricted to a dull routine that makes his life a drudgery rather than a pleasure. Of some kinds of business this may be said; but if a farmer has capital proportioned to his land, and ability for management, he may choose his method of working it so as to give fullest scope to his individual liking for work. If his preference be for mechanics the farmer can profitably buy and work a great amount of farm machinery. He may build him a shop, shoe his horses and do the blacksmithing that other farmers hire done. Or he may become a mason and carpenter, building on his farm houses that will add more than their cost to its value. We know farmers who have done this, receiving yearly in rents 12 to 15 per cent. on the money cost of tenant houses built mainly by their own labor.

If the farmer's instinct is towards the mercantile profession, says the American Cultivator, it is easy for him on the farm to find opportunities for buying and selling that will develop and cultivate this instinct. It requires a good deal of mercantile ability to market successfully a great variety of crops. Farmers who lack this ability sometimes lose more in marketing than they make by a year's work. This is still more true in the buying and selling of farm stock. To know what to sell and what to keep for future profit is the central point in making a mercantile success. Here the farmer can often take a lesson from the merchant. He no more than the tradesman can expect to make a profit on everything he has in stock. Sometime he will be occasionally obliged to sacrifice at a loss in order to turn his capital into something that pays better. How many old and worthless animals would, at the beginning of winter, go to the bonnyard on many farms, if their owners took to heart the lesson of the merchant's "closing out sales at less than cost?"

The great advantage of the farmer's business is that it need not develop any one faculty to the exclusion of others. With the great increase of labor-saving implements on the farm there is much less drudgery in farm work than used to be the case. With less drudgery there is opportunity for a farmer now to become an all-around, fully developed man as never before. If he markets his farm products intelligently, as he should, he will need the enterprise and wide intelligence that of old was the especial characteristic of the merchant. In short, to be successful the modern farmer must keep fully abreast of the improvements of his time, and know something about what is everywhere going on in the world.

Should Have an Ice House.

The National Stockman gives this excellent advice: "Every farmer should have an ice house, and if he is a dairyman also there is the greater need of having a plentiful supply of ice. Even in case of cool spring water running through the dairy (and this is a great advantage) there are times in summer when ice will be very useful. The ice house can be made of rough lumber and need not cost much, and it is best built entirely above ground, though in well drained soils an underground house will keep ice very well. A pond can be made by damming up any little brook if there is no river or lake within short hauling distance. It is a good time now to make the dam, if one is to be made, and have it all ready against the coming of cold weather. In parts of the country where the ice crop is uncertain, the first ice made of sufficient thickness

should be secured but in cold sections it is better to wait till the ice is thick and the weather steadily cold, because ice put away during cold weather will keep much better than that put away during a thaw; besides, it is much pleasanter to handle ice during cold than during slushy weather. After the ice is in the house it can be covered with sawdust, shavings, leaves, tar, or almost anything of that character. The roof of the house should shed rain perfectly and between the roof and ice there should be good ventilation. As regards quantities, a cube of 12 feet will be enough for ordinary use, but the larger the cube the better and longer it will keep.

Broad Tires Draw Big Loads.

There are ten or twelve wagons in town having old mowing machine wheels on the running gear, says an Iowa exchange. These wheels and axles cost only the price of old iron. The hay rack is only thirty-six inches higher than the axles. I have drawn many loads of hay with my rig on ground so soft that an ordinary tire would not have been supported. The mowing machine axle is cut in two in the middle and holes punched in the end, and bands or clamps placed around a wooden axle tree in order to make the axle long enough for a wagon body between the wheels. The cogs on the wheels are cut off with the hammer and cold chisel, so that the rims are smooth. I have cut them from twenty wheels without breaking a rim. The bolsters are made the same size as those of my wagon, so any box or rack may set on. This wagon saves hard or heavy lifting and is used almost entirely upon the farm. Owing to the broad tires one horse can draw a heavier load than two with the ordinary wagon. I also have a stone boat on four of the wheels which I use a great deal. It is hung under the axles, about sixteen inches from the ground, and saves all heavy lifting.

Farming Pays.

Farming may be dull business, but then there is always work enough for a busy, active man, and he pays just as good a profit as talking horse or discussing politics in the village grocery. It is a rare thing to see an industrious farmer in the poorhouse or in the State prison for embezzlement. The inmates of these institutions all come from the higher grades of society, from among the high-toned class, too proud and lazy to earn an honest living, but not too proud to steal other people's earnings. —Mirror and Farmer.

Colts in Winter.

The colt forced to live his first winter on corn-stalks and keep warm by exercise will not make a valuable horse. He needs exercise and shelter. He cannot be treated the same as a fully matured animal, that simply needs to live; he must grow. The shelter need not be particularly warm, but should have a tight roof and no cracks in the side to permit drafts. Hang the doors so as to fit tightly, and then close them every night. Have the manger and feed-boxes low enough to be reached easily. Cover the floor with a thick layer of straw; nothing gives an animal more comfort than a good, warm bed. During the day, unless it be very cold or stormy, the colt is better outside. We want young horses with muscle and bone; hence, exercise during the winter must not be overlooked. If they are fed at the same time every night they will usually come up to the stable of their own accord; however, if they should not, go and get them. The loss of feed and exposure may bring on coughs, colds, and distemper. Careful wintering is most important to all young stock, and more especially to horses. More damage can be done in one winter by neglect than can be repaired in the lifetime of a horse. —Orange Judd Farmer.

Saving Bones for Manure.

The value of phosphate has in many places been forcibly shown farmers by dear experience. Despite this much of the supply of old bones that

naturally accumulates around every farm-house is allowed to go to waste. According to the American Cultivator if these bones are saved they may be fitted for crushing by first burning and then after breaking into small pieces composting them with barnyard manure, while a whole bone buried in the soil decays slowly these small pieces in which decay has been begun soon give all their manurial value to the roots of crops. This mixture of ground bone and stable manure is especially good for fruit trees and grape vines. Old bones are often sold for a cent a pound, but they are worth much more than this to keep on the farm and work into the manure heap.

Broadcasting Wheat.

It is found that in wet seasons wheat that is broadcast succeeds quite as well as that which is drilled. The reason is that the drilled wheat is usually covered too deeply. Drilling is resorted to mainly for the purpose of distributing commercial mineral manure with the seed. Then it pays, but even then the ground must be rolled to prevent the drill teeth from going too deeply. If all the seed is not covered it does not matter. The smaller amount planted near the surface will make more vigorous growth and stand the winter better.

Dry Places for Pits.

In pitting potatoes or other roots a place that is not likely to be flooded, or to be saturated by stagnant water should be chosen. It need not be on very high ground, but a trench 10 or 12 inches deep should be dug around the pit and lower than it. On the other lower side of this trench it should have an outlet so water cannot stand in it. It is better to have dry places for the pit, though such soil freezes deeper than that filled with water.

What the Cooks Say.

MUFFINS.—One pint of boiled milk, one egg, one tablespoon of sugar and half a cup of soft yeast. Add flour to make as stiff as bread sponge, set at night and stir down in the morning, and take in muffin rings for breakfast.

POTATO PUFFS.—Take cold mashed potatoes, and add two eggs beaten separately, a little salt, a tablespoon of melted butter and a little rich milk and stir all together. Bake in muffin rings in a brisk oven, watching carefully.

PEACH DUMPLINGS.—Choose large freestone peaches; peel them, make a paste of six ounces of butter to one pound of flour; coffer each peach with this paste, and boil them in cloths or nets till the fruit is tender. They are very nice. Serve with sugar and cream.

CHICKEN TOAST.—Mince cold chicken fine; mix with it a pint of cream or rich milk, the yolks of two eggs and season well with celery salt. Let it simmer over the fire for a few minutes, then pour it over several slices of nice toast that have been well buttered. Serve at once.

HAM OMELET.—Beat half a dozen eggs separately, very light. Have ready a spider with three tablespoons of hot butter and then pour in the eggs. Let them brown on the bottom and on top, then spread over it a cup of finely-chopped ham; fold the omelet over, take up and serve immediately.

BLACKBERRY CORDIAL.—Gather the ripest fruit, mast it in a pan with a large wooden spoon, strain out all the juice, and allow a quarter of a pound of sugar to a pint of the juice. Mix the juice and sugar together, and boil and skim it; then strain it again, and when cool to each pint of juice add a teaspoonful of brandy. Bottle it and it will be fit for use. This is highly esteemed by some in cases of dysentery.

WHEAT-WHEAT PUEDING.—Mix in a bowl two cupfuls of whole-wheat flour, half a teaspoonful of soda, dissolved in half a cupful of New Orleans molasses, half a teaspoonful of salt and one cupful of sweet milk; mix well, and add one cupful of ripe strawberries; pour into a buttered mold; place in a kettle of boiling water, and boil steady 2½ hours.

Serve with cream, or if a rich sauce is desired, a foamy sauce will be very nice. This can be made with any other fruit, fresh or dried.

The Sense of Smell in Dogs.

The sense of smell is by no means so developed in man as in dogs, cats, and other animals, but it is often abnormally keen in individuals deprived of other senses—blind, deaf mutes, for example, can recognize their friends and form an opinion about strangers solely by means of this sense.

Possibly however, animals are only sensitive to certain smells, while unconscious of others that affect us. If this be the case they would naturally be able to follow up one particular scent more easily than a man, this scent to which they are sensitive being to them less confused with others.

Dogs are able to track their masters through crowded streets, where recognition by sight is quite impossible, and can find a hidden biscuit even when its faint smell is still further disguised by eau de cologne.

In some experiments Mr. Romanes lately made with a dog he found that it could easily track him when he was far out of sight, though no fewer than eleven people had followed him, stepping exactly in his footprints in order to confuse the scent.

The dog seemed to track him chiefly by the smell of his boots, for when without them, or with new boots on, it failed; but followed, though slowly and hesitatingly, when his master was without either boots or stockings. Dogs and cats certainly get more information by means of this sense than a man can; they often get greatly excited over certain smells, and remember them for very long periods.

A Steering Balloon.

The problem of steering balloons is said to have been solved by a German gardener. The object of his balloon, which is shaped like a torpedo, is to overcome with the greatest ease the resistance of the air. It differs from the ordinary balloon in dispensing with the net as an envelope, and has its folds sewed into the case, so that if a rupture occurs at any point the rent does not extend beyond one fold, and the gas escapes quite gradually. The car is as long as the balloon itself, and has a winged scutum in front and a rudder behind. It hangs by ropes fastened by loops to the lower folds of the case. The screw is driven by a petroleum motor of aluminum weighing only 120 kilograms, and making 1,000 revolutions in a minute. This drives the balloon forward, and the rise and fall is regulated by a sliding weight and by the manipulation of a ring which varies the air pressure on the surface by changing the position of the balloon to horizontal or oblique. It is estimated that a large balloon on this model will cost about \$3,000.

Patents of Monopoly.

Long before the days of the Stuarts, monopolies were quite common in England. Elizabeth was a great developer of them. Patents to deal exclusively in particular articles were granted so lavishly to the courtiers that hardly a commodity remained free: even salt, leather, and coal were the subjects of patents, the list of which, when read over in Parliament, was so long that a member asked incredulously, "Is not bread among the number?" The practice was for the favored courtiers to sell their patents of monopoly to companies of merchants—or syndicates, as we should call them nowadays—to work them. Rival political parties struggled, not to redress the grievance under which the people groaned, but to obtain a share of the profits. If Essex had a monopoly of sweet wine, Raleigh held one of cards; indeed, it is hard to say how many "patents" either of them held from first to last. The shameful manner in which such powers could be exercised can be well imagined.

THERE are so many things to make a man tired that he never feels more than half well.

RUNNING STORE ACCOUNTS.

The Practice Leads to Much Annoyance and Is Expensive.

The habit of running store accounts is not a good one. People are led in many cases to buy articles which might be dispensed with and in this way debts have been incurred which it was impossible to pay and many a farmer has lost his farm by such procedure. A writer in the National Stockman says: The principle of a standing store account is something I do not like. Its practice has resulted in bringing ruin to many a humble home. Perhaps my prejudice against the store account is too strong, for I have always had a feeling that I did not want my name on the retail merchant's books. It may be helpful to some reader to know how I managed in this matter. Of course when one has nothing to sell at the store and must pay cash for what he buys the solution is simple. But for several years I have done something in the truck line, and the stores are accustomed to pay in trade for what they buy. At first I insisted on getting cash for what I sold. My argument with the dealers was to the effect that they would get the money back, for I always paid spot cash for what I bought. And this, doubtless, would be the ideal plan if the merchants could only be made to see it in that light. For what is the use of money anyway except to facilitate the making of commercial exchanges and save the keeping of endless accounts? But my experience soon convinced me that the merchants were very reluctant to see the cash pass from their hands and were less willing to patronize me on this plan. I saw that they rather favored those who had long standing accounts with them, and especially those who were slow to pay and were owing them. I showed them that this was paying a premium on the slow-paying customer; but it was no use to moralize, the fact remained.

Next I tried the plan of making daily purchases so as to keep square without demanding cash. But this had a tendency to lead me to buying more than I needed. Then I adopted the plan of taking due-bills. This worked very well. At the dealer's suggestion I would keep a memorandum of sales for the week and would get my due-bill every Saturday. Whatever I bought would be jotted on the back of the paper until the amount was enough to balance its face. A few years ago some of the grocerymen got up a lot of printed due-bills in sums ranging from 5 cents to \$5, payable to the bearer. They were on little cards about one by two inches in size, and contained some such words as these:

THIS CARD IS GOOD FOR
FIFTY CENTS
IN TRADE AT OUR STORE
BLANK & CO.

This settled the difficulty completely. Dealers in hardware, dry goods, clothing, and in fact nearly all of our merchants became willing to take these due-bills in trade. Today every groceryman in our town has them, and one can trade with them wherever he pleases. It is seldom that a dealer refuses to take any groceryman's due-bill, or "chips" as they more commonly call them. Sometimes there is grumbling from a merchant who finds himself too heavily loaded with such "chips;" and then he is heard to declare them a nuisance and say that the grocerymen might just as well do away with these things, and pay cash for what they buy. And so think I. Yet as a method of dealing with customers who sell produce and take pay in trade their use is of great value over the plan of running an account. They are just as convenient to use as money, and they save the extra work, as well as the blunders and misunderstandings that often arise from the use of the account book. Another use is often made of these due-bills which shows their convenience—mostly in the dealer's favor. If a man wants to buy groceries on a run-

ning account for a few months, the dealer at once hands him the amount he thinks he will need in "chips," and takes his note for that sum. This saves the bother of making a charge on the books every time a purchase is made. And it gives the borrower a chance to buy elsewhere, where his credit might not be good.

The Illustration of "Pickwick."

The history of the "Pickwick Papers," the change in the original design, the tragic death of Seymour, the hasty appointment and dismissal of Buss, have been graphically described by Forster in his life of Dickens. The work, which had started dependent, for the most part, on illustration, and had gained success on its letter-press, was now in a perilous state. Its originator dead by his own hand, and his successor declared incapable, the need of an illustrator was soon noised abroad among the artistic fraternity, and two competitors sent in their designs. Hablot Browne and William Makepeace Thackeray. Thackeray, as we know from his own lips, had at this time the intention of becoming an artist. With a few sketches he called upon Dickens, who told him that the choice had fallen upon Browne. Leaving Furnival's Inn, Thackeray made his way to Newman street to acquaint his rival with his success, and to offer him the earliest congratulations. Together these young men immediately repaired to a neighboring public house, where a banquet, consisting of sausages and bottled stout, was held for the better satisfying of their appetites, and to do greater honor to the occasion. The feast finished, the good wishes pledged, and Thackeray gone, Browne started off to communicate the news and to get the assistance of his quondam fellow-apprentice, Robert Young, who was then boarding in Chester place. Bidding him bring his late-kept. Browne hurried him back to Newman street, and throughout that night the two worked upon the plates, Brown etching while Young bit them in. By morning the first was finished, and in Sam Weller a creation was given to the world, a new charter had entered what may be called the realm of historic fiction—Century.

A Queer People.

The Chinese do everything backwards. Their compass points to the South instead of the North. The men wear skirts and the women trousers; while the men wear their hair long, the women coil theirs in a knot. The dress-makers are men; the women carry burdens.

The spoken language is not written, and the written language is not spoken. Books are read backwards, and any notes are inserted at the top. White is used for mourning, and bridesmaids wear black—instead of being maidens these functionaries are old women.

The Chinese surname comes first, and they shake their own hands instead of the hands of one whom they would greet.

Vessels are launched sideways, and horses are mounted from the off side. They commence their dinners with dessert, and end up with soup and fish.

In shaving, the barber operates on the head, cutting the hair upward, then downward, and then polishes it off with a small knife, which is passed over the eyebrows and into the nose to remove any superfluous hairs.

Bay Rum.

Bay rum is manufactured in Dominica from the dried leaves of *Pimenta acris*. Bay rum is procured by distillation, and this in a very simple manner. The leaves are picked from the trees and then dried; in this state they are placed in the retort, which is then filled with water and the process of distillation is carried on. The vapor is then condensed in the usual way and forms what is known as "bay oil," a very small quantity of which is required for each puncheon of rum. The manufacture of bay rum is carried on at the northern end of Dominica, and proves a very lucrative business to those engaged in it, as the plants are plentiful in this district.